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FRANCE: Strategic Ballistic Missiles

President Giscard's views, as outlined in a recent address to the French Air Force Academy, seem to favor developing mobile ballistic missiles similar to the Soviet SS-20 over current French strategic cruise missile efforts. Defense officials may not share Giscard's opinions, and we do not know of any funding for either program.

According to Giscard, the French are converting nine of the 18 IRBM silos for the S-3.

Giscard said that France is considering a mobile land-based IRBM similar in range, accuracy, and effectiveness to the SS-20. He said that cruise missiles now under study were impractical because of the large numbers required and the need for significant technology development.